

SARL NEWS SUNDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2013

You are listening to ZS6SRL, the official radio station of the South African Radio League, the national body for amateur radio in South Africa. The SARL broadcasts a news bulletin every Sunday at 08:15 CAT in Afrikaans and at 08:30 CAT in English. To listen to a web stream, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today' and follow the links for details. For audio via Echolink, connect to ZS0JPL-R.

You can download this bulletin and previous ones from www.sarl.org.za and also subscribe there to receive future bulletins by e-mail.

Your newsreader this morning is (name and call sign), on 145,725 MHz from Pretoria, with a relay on 7,066 MHz SSB. (Other news readers change to suit).

IN THE NEWS TODAY:

BOOK NOW FOR THE RTA IN CAPE TOWN

SARL LAUNCHES A YOUTH ESSAY COMPETITION

SOLAR CYCLE PUZZLES

You are listening to ZS6SRL. Stay tuned for more details on these and other important and interesting items.

BOOK NOW FOR THE RTA IN CAPE TOWN

There are only a few days left to book for the Cape Town RTA at the lower rate. From Wednesday the rate for members increases to R100 and for non members to R150.

The Radio Technology in Action symposium in Bellville on 5 October is the last in the 2013 series. Visit www.sarl.org.za and follow the link from the home page news section. You can also check the status of your booking. The booking closes on Wednesday 2 October 2013 after which it is only possible to do a walk-in registration which will cost substantially more.

SARL LAUNCHES A YOUTH ESSAY COMPETITION

As part of Youth in Amateur Radio Week to be held from 10 - 15 February 2014 the SARL is holding an essay competition with the title "Amateur Radio your gateway to a career in engineering and science. Young people under the age of 20 are invited to explore how amateur radio has shaped the development of radio science and how today amateur radio can be a gateway into an engineering, electronic and science career.

The competition was launched at the Eskom Science Expo for young people held during the past week in Boksburg. The event was a great success and provided good visibility of amateur radio to young people. A full report on the SARL's participation will be in next week's SARL News and on the web.

Participants will compete in two different age groups with the main prize in each age group a laptop and accessories. The two groups are under 15 years and between 16 and 20 years old.

Length of the Essay: between 800 and 1200 words, Language: any of South Africa's official languages. Closing date: 28 February 2014. Entries must be in a word format and submitted by email to youthweek2014@sarl.org.za.

The winning entry in each category will be presented with his/her award at the annual SARL Convention to be held in Pretoria on 12 April 2014. There will be 10 runners up prizes in each category and every person submitting an essay will be awarded a certificate. For more details and links to resource material will be available from 6 October on www.hamradio.org.za.

SOLAR CYCLE PUZZLES

Predictions that 2013 would see an upsurge in solar activity and geomagnetic storms have proved to be a false alarm. Instead, the current peak in solar cycle 24 is among the weakest for a century. Amateur Radio Newline's Stephan Kinford, N8WB, takes a look at what scientists are saying: Subdued solar activity has prompted controversial comparisons with the Maunder Minimum. The Maunder Minimum, also known as the prolonged sunspot minimum, is the name used for the period starting in about 1645 and continuing to about 1715 when sunspots became exceedingly rare, as noted by solar observers of the time. These minimums supposedly coincided with the coldest period in the last millennium.

But Giuliana DeToma, a solar scientist at the High Altitude Observatory in Colorado says that the unusually low number of sunspots in recent years is not an indication that we are going into a Maunder Minimum, but added that researchers do not know how or why the Maunder Minimum started. As such, they really cannot predict the next one.

Other solar experts think the downturn is linked to a different phenomenon called the Gleissberg cycle. The Gleissberg cycle, named after Wolfgang Gleissberg, is thought to be an amplitude modulation of the 11-year Schwabe Cycle which predicts a period of weaker solar activity every century or so. If that turns out to be true, the sun could remain unusually quiet through the middle of the 2020s. However, as scientists still do not fully understand why the Gleissberg cycle takes place, the evidence is, at best, inconclusive. The vagaries of solar cycles remain.

CAN THE SARL COMMUNICATE WITH YOU?

Sending paper documents through the mail is becoming increasingly expensive. In many cases it is unavoidable, but whenever possible the SARL prefers sending emails or SMSs.

The SARL will, at some unspecified time in the future, stop making provision for amateurs with no email addresses. To be ready for that event, start preparing now.

Get an email address, even if it is at an Internet café or on the computer of a friend or family member.

To ensure that you receive messages from the SARL, add your cell phone number and your email to your membership detail on the SARL database. To check and update your membership status and contact detail, go to the web address given at the end of this news item. If there is any problem with your membership, contact the admin office at admin@sarl.org.za or the secretary secretary@sarl.org.za

The telephone number of the admin office is 011 675 2393. The web address where you can do the check is www.sarl.org.za/public/Membercheck.asp

CLUB NEWS

No club news was received last week.

SARL News invites clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and short-wave listeners. Submit news items - if possible in both English and Afrikaans to www.sarl.org.za/newsinbox.asp, not later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

HF PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the weakest solar maximum in 100 years continues with low levels of solar activity expected. None of the visible sunspots poses a threat for strong flares.

If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around 49.

All the bands from 20 to 10 m will provide lots of DX fun with 20 m providing the best openings with 15 m not far behind.

Please visit the new website <http://spaceweather.sansa.org.za> for further information.

DIARY OF EVENTS 2 October - Last day to register for the RTA in Cape Town, go to www.sarl.org.za. 5 October - East Rand Club flea market at 12:00. 17 October - Radio Amateur Examination. 31 December - Last day to submit amateur radio video; get details from www.amateurradio.org.za.

The SARL invites you to listen to Amateur Radio Today every Sunday morning at 10:00 CAT on 145,750 MHz in the Pretoria area, with relays on 7 082, 7 205, and 17 660 kHz. There is also a podcast by ZS6RO. For a web-stream and Echolink by ZS6FCS, visit www.sarl.org.za, click on 'Amateur Radio Today', go down the green column and click on 'LISTEN ON THE WEB'. A repeat transmission can be heard on Mondays at 16:30 UTC on 3 230 kHz. The website also lists various other retransmissions. Reception reports, comments and suggestions are invited. Send an email to artoday@sarl.org.za. Sentech sponsors the transmissions on the non-amateur frequencies.

You have listened to a bulletin of the South African Radio League compiled and edited by Louis Kirstein, ZS1LK.

Thank you for listening, 73.

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